THE FAITHFUL And Wiſe Servant.

Diſcovered in a Sermon preached to the Parliament of the Commonwealth of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, at their late private Faſt in the Parliament Houſe, *Jan.* 9. 1656.

By *Matthew Barker*, a Servant of Chriſt, and his Church in the work of the Miniſtry, at *Leonards Eaſtcheap*, *London*.

And his Lord ſaid unto him, Well done thou good and faithful ſervant. Matth. 25. 21.

Keep therefore and do (my STATUTES and JUDGEMENTS) for this is your wiſdom, and your underſtanding in the ſight of the Nations, which ſhall hear all theſe Statutes, and ſay, Surely this great Nation is a wiſe and underſtanding People.

LONDON,

Printed by *J. Macock*, for *Luke Fawn*, and are to be ſold at his Shop at the Signe of the *Parrot*, in *Pauls* Church-yard, 1657.

To the Truly Honourable, the Parliament of the Commonwealth of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*.

THE Great Leſſon *that the Lord hath been teaching man in all Ages* (*which, alas, he hath yet but a little learned*) *is, That he is nothing without God.* David *ſought to teach his Son* Solomon *this, in that Pſalm that he compoſed on purpoſe for him,* Except the Lord build the Houſe, they labour in vain that build it: Except the Lord keep the City, the Watchman waketh but in vain. Salomon *he knew was to ſucceed him in his Throne, and to have affairs of a Publique and weighty* Import *in his hands, and therefore would have him well digeſt this firſt and beſt Rule in Chriſtian Policy,* That the creature acts in all things in vain, wherein it acts without God.

No rule is more needful for Magiſtrates *to learn, and which when once well learned, and well practiſed, will of all other things (if the world could but once believe it) moſt avail to the proſperity and ſucceſs of their Affairs.*

When God called Gideon *forth to a Publique Work, he firſt tells him he would be with him; and then adds,* Go forth in This thy might.

If the Creature goes forth in any might but this, it is a poor weak thing.

It is Recorded *in Sacred Story, that the* Iſraelites followed Saul trembling, *when he went to Battel againſt the Philiſtims.*

They thought they ſhould be ſtrong, and victorious when they had gotten a King, and no ſooner had they him, but they follow him trembling. Such will all creature ſtrength be to us, it cannot deliver us from Fear, and Falling; or be a Rock to the heart of Man.

Your deep ſenſe of this (Right Honourable) *was that which I ſuppoſe moved you to ſet apart a day for a more ſolemn ſeeking Aid and Counſel from God; and wherein you was pleaſed to call for my poor Service in that days work, together with two others far more able. That we might do for you,* (*according to what* Jonathan *did to* David *when he was in ſtreights, in the Wilderneſs of* Ziph) *ſtrengthen your hands in God.*

You were then as in a Wilderneſs, *and you did not clearly ſee your way; but have your hands been ſince more ſtrengthned in God?*

You was pleaſed to command (for ſo is your Deſire

to

to me) that I should speak something from the Lord to you; and what I spake, as it was calculated for your Meridian, so I intended it for no wider a Sphære then the Walls of your own House: But seeing you are pleased to call for it to walk abroad, I have obeyed you, though not without some reluctance.

The Work you met upon was Serious, and the Day Solemn; so that I durst not but preach plainly, as those will find that read.

Only I must acquaint you, that the latter end of the Sermon I preached not, because I was prevented by the time, chusing rather to be abrupt then tedious.

Which indeed was a further Motive to me to yeild it to the Press; and that I might present that to your Eyes, which I could not then present to your Ears.

And here and there I have added something above what I spake, as being then compelled to shorten, where I could with least loss.

So that this I can say, I have presented you with a fuller expression of what was in my thoughts and papers in the Sermon as Printed, then the Sermon as Preached.

What-ever it is, though it shews forth much of my weakness, yet I assure you it shews forth my hearty willingness to serve Christ, and to serve you in a subordination unto him.

One generation passeth, to make way for another; and so men serving their generations, have past away that others might come in, Moses was taken off, that Joshua might come in, and David to make way for Salomon;

Salomon; *And ſo other Powers, and Parliaments have paſt away to make room for you. And now ye are upon the Stage, and therefore endeavour to Act Nobly, to Act Gallantly, as ſtanding in the view, not of men only, but of God, and that when you go off you may go off with the Applauſe, I will not ſay of men, but of God himſelf.*

There is a Providence *that orders in what* Generation *every man ſhall be brought forth; and therefore every man ſhould be enquiring, why was I brought forth in this generation, and not another? And what is the work of this Generation wherein the Lord expects that I ſhould come forth, and ſerve him? And it is Satans deſign and policy to amuſe men about other work that concerns them not, that ſo he might divert them from that which is their proper work.*

And ſhall I be bold here, (Honoured Gentlemen) *to put you in mind of that, which I hear hath been ſome time already under your conſideration; and that is to do ſomething toward the payment of the debts that are yet behind upon the Publique faith, eſpecially to the poorer ſort: Many poor honeſt people live yet in hope that that Faith will not fail.*

I know the wants and expences of the Nation are great, yet Mercy and Juſtice never to this day did any wrong to a State.

The condition alſo of poor Priſoners, that would pay if they could, as I was ſolicited to preſent it before you, ſo I humbly leave it to your Juſtice and Wiſdom to conſider of it.

I know alſo your work is great, and God may cut out more work for you, and for his people in this Na-

tion

tion ere long, then they are not aware of. Oh it is an happy thing to have Spirits fitted to what work God will engage us in.

And let us take heed that calm times do not make us ſecure, and ſettle in the world.

You know when Sampſon *ſlept in* Delilah's *lap, then he loſt his ſtrength, and loſt God: and when he went to rouſe up himſelf as at other times, then he felt his weakneſs.*

So if through ſecurity, and lying in the lap of any beloved Delilah, *we do fall aſleep, we hazard the loſs of our ſtrength, and the departing of God, and then when we may be called forth to any work, we may ariſe and think to prevaile as in the days of old, when alas our ſtrength is gone.*

Oh be watchful, faithful, low in your own eyes; and the lower you are thus, the more will God delight to honour you, and the more honour he puts upon you; the lower be you ſtill.

As we read of Moſes, Gideon, David, Salomon, yea and Saul, *when the Lord came to call them forth to publick work, and put, honour upon them, then were they* loweſt *in their own eyes.*

God delights to work by ſuch Inſtruments that are low in their own eyes; yea that may be low in the eyes of others; that glory may bee his alone.

And to be ſerviceable in your Generation to Chriſt, his People, and the Nations whereof you are the Meſſengers: if you pleaſe at your leiſure to peruſe the following Diſcourſe, you ſhall find it to

be

be your greatest Interest, and your Truest Wisdom, and as I have in my Sermon endeavoured to discover it; so, that you may eminently attain it, shall be the earnest prayer of him, who would fain approve himself to be the

Faithful Servant of Jesus Christ,

and of

Your Honours in him,

MATTHEW BARKER.

THE FAITHFUL And Wise Servant.

Delivered in a Sermon preached before the Parliament, at their late Fast, *January* 9. 1656. From

Psal. 2. 10, and part of Vers. 11.

Be wise, now therefore, O ye Kings, be instructed ye Judges of the Earth,
Serve the Lord with fear, &c.

THis Psalm is an eminent Propheſie of the Kingdom of the Meſſiah, and ſo acknowledged by the Jews themſelves, although it agree to *David*'s Kingdom in the letter; yet *David*'s Kingdom was not ſet up ſo much for it ſelf, as to be a type and ſhaddow of another Kingdom to be ſet up after it in the world. And though it be the moſt bleſſed Kingdom that ever aroſe, and ſet up on purpoſe for the de-

livery and salvation of man, yet when it came to be set up, the whole world in a manner rose up against it. In the Psalm we have

1. A Distribution of the persons, the several sorts of men that stood up in opposition to it: As first, The common people, and that both of Gentiles, *Why do the Heathen rage?* and of Jews, *And the people imagine a vain thing?* verse 1. And secondly, The Kings and Rulers of the earth; *The Kings of the Earth set themselves, and the Rulers take Counsel together against the Lord, and against his Anointed*, v. 2.

2. He shews implicitely at least wherein they do especially oppose it, *viz.* in the Laws, Statutes, and Ordinances of it; *Let us break their Bands asunder, and cast away their Cords from us.* verse 3. This Kingdom comes to lay bands upon men, to lay Laws and yokes upon the lusts, and licentious nature of man, which he cannot bear.

3. He shews what success they meet with in their opposition; as it is a bad work, so it meets with as bad success: for it is said,

1. *God laughs at them*; As a company of mad-men, busying themselves about their own ruine, verse. 4. *He that sits in the Heavens shall laugh at them.*

2. *He speaks to them*, and that *in his wrath*, he gives them warning to forbear, as in verse. 5. Before he falls upon them, he doth admonish them of several things; As

1. That it was his King they oppose, a King that he himself had set up, as in verse. 6.

2. A King also setled and established by his Decree, as in verse. 7.

3. The King also was his own Son; *Thou art my Son*: And he tells them the particular time of his Installment, to day, *This day have I begotten thee*. Which the Apostle applies *Act.* 13. 33. to the day of Christs resurrection; for though Christ was anointed before, yea he was born a King, yet he came not into the full possession and execution of his Kingly office until his Resurrection; As the Apostle asserts *Rom.* 14. 9. *To this end Christ died, and rose, and revived, that he*

might

might be Lord both of quick and dead. Yea and Christ himself attests it, *Matt.* 28. 18. where he speakes after his resurrection, *All power is given me both in Heaven and Earth.*

4. He tels them, he was a King that he had given universal Lordship and dominion to; *I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession*, vers. 8.

These things they are told by way of admonition, but when this prevailes not: then, Lastly, he falls upon them, and he breakes them in pieces, *Thou shalt break them with a Rod of Iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a Potters Vessel*, as vers. 9.

Now in the three last verses of the Psalm he makes application of the whole preceding discourse, and applies it particularly to the Rulers and Governours of the Earth; either because they are the most likely to oppose the Kingdom of Christ, as fearing it might clash with their earthly and secular interests, as *Herod* did; Or else because *their* subjecting to it, is likely to make a fair way for its entertainment throughout the world: And he applies it by way of serious advise and counsel to them.

1. First, he adviseth them to be wise, and well instructed; (as it behoves men in power to be men of wisdom) *Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings, be instructed ye Judges of the Earth*, vers. 9.

2 He tels them wherein they are to declare their wisdom; *Serve the Lord with fear, rejoyce with trembling; Kiss the Son*, which he presseth by a double argument.

1. *Ab incommodo*, from the great evil, and mischief that was likely to ensue in case they did not thus; *Least he be angry, and you perish in the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.*

2. *Ab utili*, from the great and blessed advantage that would follow upon it, in case they did; *Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* Thus you have in brief the Analysis of the Psalm: But, I must go back to my Text, which is nothing else, as I said, but a piece of serious and wholsome

Counsel administred to the Rulers, and Governours of the world, whether higher or lower, more fixed or transient about their comportment towards Christ, and his Kingdom, when he is setting it up in the world.

And though this word was spoken by *David*, many hundred, yea thousands of years ago, yet it speaks now as much as ever, and is this day brought (though by a mean instrument) within your walls, and speakes to you.

In the Text we have considerable.

1. The matter, or the substantial part of the Counsel; which is, *Serve the Lord.*

2. Here are the persons, to whom it is particularly directed; the *Kings, and Judges of the Earth*, they are the persons especially admonisht to serve the Lord.

3. Here is the manner how the Lord is to be served, *Serve the Lord with fear.*

4. Here is the motive or argument whereby this Counsel is enforced; And that is, This will be their *Wisdom*, hereby they will shew themselves wise men, *men well instructed.*

1. First, I shall speak to the matter, or substance of the Counsel: which is, *serve the Lord*, where we have: first the Act, *serve*; and the Object about which it is conversant, *The Lord.*

The Act, *Serve*; The word *Service*, as applyed to God or Christ, is taken either more strictly, for that service we perform when we are upon some part of his institute worship, as prayer, hearing, &c. and so is enjoyned in the second Commandement, and is so taken, *Acts* 26. 7.

Or else it is taken more largely, for any duty of Christianity, any action of mans life, which he performes in obedience to the will of God, and subordination to his glory: and so it takes in all the other 9. commandements, and is thus used, *Rom.* 12. 11.

And as I conceive also in the Text.

Then for the Object, *The Lord.* In the Heb. Jehovah: And whether it is God the Father here spoken of, or Christ, who is the King mentioned before, that was set up, and the

the Son that is to be kiſſed, though it is ſomwhat controverted among Expoſitors, yet I think it not material to ſpend time about it; ſeeing we cannot ſerve one aright, but we muſt ſerve both, the Son as in the Father, and the Father as in the Son.

And then for the perſons that are thus more particularly admoniſht to ſerve the Lord, they are *Kings*, *and Judges*, men that ſit at the upper end of the world. The eminency of their place doth not the more acquit them, but rather the more ingage them to ſervice: Though they be *Kings*, yet there is a King eminently above them, from whom their power is derived upon them, and therefore they muſt ſerve; If they be *Judges*, yet there is a Judg higher then they, before whoſe tribunal they muſt ſtand, and be judged, and therefore they muſt be ſerving.

So that the main propoſitions from hence reſulting, which I ſhall inſiſt upon, is this,

That the great work that every man hath to do in this world, eſpecially thoſe that are ſet down in places of power and ſeat of judgement, is, To be ſerviceable to the Lord. This is the work we come into the world for, and if this be not done, we ſhall give but a ſad account of our lives to the Lord. God made all creatures for ſervice, the Sun, Moon, and Stars for ſervice, the Clouds, the Air, the Fire, the Earth for ſervice, &c. but much more Man: And it is a monſter in nature for the creature not to ſerve its end. As for the Sun and Stars above to confine their light within themſelves, and not to ſend it down upon the world; for the clouds to hold in their moiſture, and not to reſolve it upon the earth: for the earth to impriſon its fatneſs and virtue within its ſelfe, and not ſend it forth in graſs, corn, and fruit for the uſe of man and beaſt: would not this be a monſtrous thing in the world? So for man to be ſerving himſelf with thoſe powers and abilities that God hath put into him, and not the Lord, is a thing as abſurd and anomalous. Look through the whole Creation, you ſhall not find any creature that was made for it ſelf: every creature *Doct.*

creature is serving some end without it self. So is man much more made for an end without himself; which is to serve the Lord.

So that, (Right Honourable) my work I come upon this day amongst you, is to put you in mind of your *Debt*, I mean that Homage, Duty, Service, and Subjection, which you all do owe to the Lord; and which must be paid by every one of you: for though the *Debt of Satisfaction* which through sin we owe to the justice of God, he remit it for Christs sake to his people, yet the *Debt of Service* which we owe to his glory, he neither hath remitted it, or ever will remit it to any of the sons of men.

But that we may a little understand what it is to serve the Lord, take this twofold distinction.

There is a serving God either mediately, or more immediately.

First, As to the Mediate Service, The whole Creation serveth God; by and through man, the creatures without *reason*, without *sence*, and without *life*, do serve their Creator, as they hold forth to man such footsteps of his glory wherein he may admire, praise and glorifie him.

The greatness of the works of God shew forth his greatness, their beauty his beauty, their perfection his perfection, their order and workmanship, his infinite wisdom; their course, and motion, his providence in the world.

Or else they serve God through man, as they serve to maintain him in his Life, and Being, which being maintained are to be subordinated to the Lord, and to his service: The Sun sends down its influence that man might live, the clouds distil their moisture that man might live, the Sea sends forth its waters that man might live, the Earth brings forth its fruit that man might live; all do serve the life of man, that the life of man might serve the Lord.

2. There is a more immediate serving God, and so there are but two sorts of creatures, Angels, and Men, whose service can *immediately* refer to God. For no other creatures are capable

capable of an immediate application of themselves to him. They have not understanding to know him, Wills to close with him; and so not capable of applying themselves to him, or looking at him in any thing they do.

The second Distinction is this.

There is a serving the Lord, *ex Intentione*, and *præter Intentionem.*

1. *Præter Intentionem*, or accidental as to him that serveth; and so wicked men, who thought of nothing less then serving God, yet have eminently served him: As *Nebuchadnezzar* King of Babylon served a great service for God against Tyrus, *Ezek.* 29. 18, 19, 20. and God gave him the land of Egypt for his wages, though he intended nothing less then to serve God in that Designe.

And so the King of Assyria was employed by God to execute his vengeance upon the hypocritical Nation of the Jews; *Howbeit* (saith the Text) *he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so*: as you read *Isa.* 10. 6, 7.

And so when *Baasha* executed the vengeance threatned upon the house of *Jeroboam*, 1 *King.* 15. 29. and when *Zimri* executed the vengeance threatned upon *Baasha*, 1 *Kings* 16. 12. and when *Jehu* executed the judgement of God upon the house of *Ahab*, it was service done for God; though they did not do it with an intention of serving him: yea the most eminent *Prophesies* upon Record have been fulfilled besides the intention of the instruments: As that of Christ's being crucified for the redeeming of the world: *Pilate* and the Jews thought of nothing less then the fulfilling the counsel of the Lord in what they did, or in serving his decrees, or his glory therein, though they were eminently served hereby.

2. There is a serving God *ex Intentione*; when the mind and heart of man respect God in what he doth. And this is the service that God calls for, and the Text calls for, and doth alone find acceptance with God.

Now

Now to this intentional ſerving God, there are three things neceſſary, that it find acceptance. 1. That mans principle be right. 2. That his rule be right. 3. That his end be right.

1. That his *Principle* be right. It is ſomthing of *God* in man that can alone aright ſerve God. So ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 12. 28. *Let us have grace, whereby we may ſerve God acceptably.* Now grace is a divine principle, and it is only this whereby a man can ſerve acceptably.

The Apoſtle ſpeaks in *Heb.* 11. of many *Heroick* acts of ſervice done by theſe ancient Worthies, as *Abel*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Moſes*, &c. But that which gave them their acceptance was the *Principle*, they did them by *Faith*, ſaith the Text, and tells us in verſe 6. that *without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God.* There muſt be the out-going of the ſoul toward God in that ſervice which finds acceptance; Now no principle can act the ſoul towards God, but that which is divine, and ſprings from him.

2. As his *Principle*, ſo his *Rule* muſt be right; for God muſt be ſerved according to his own rule, which is his revealed Will; and where the rule is dark, we muſt either forbear until God doth clear it up, or elſe act up to it, as near as the light we have will lead us. And this is the prærogative of man above the creatures below us, though they all act by a rule, and to an end which their Creator hath ſet them, yet they are not capable of underſtanding, either their rule or their end; but man is, and therefore if he would be accepted, he muſt have reſpect to his rule: As *Saul*, he offered Sacrifice, which in it ſelf was a good thing, and the caſe was ſomwhat urgent, for *Samuel* came not, and the people began to ſcatter from him, and the Philiſtims to gather together againſt him, but becauſe he walked not by rule in that action, he was rejected of God.

1 Sam 13.

Mans righteouſneſs lies eſpecially in his conformity to the Rule; as the Schoolmen ſpeak of a *Lex æterna in Deo*, an eternal Law according to which God doth all his works both in Heaven and Earth, which is the righteouſneſs of God:

So

So there is νόμος γεγραμμένος, *Lex scripta*, a Law written either inwardly in mans heart, or without in the Scriptures, which is the rule of mans walking; and conformity thereunto is the righteousnes of man.

His *End* must also be right: For God is not served when he is not our end. A man may be praying, and fasting, and yet not serve God; doing justice, giving alms, punishing sin, rewarding vertue, and yet not at all serve God. Men indeed look most to other matter and substance of their actions, because they lie more open to the view of men; but that which God especially looks at in man, and which is the most material thing in his actions, is his end. Sometimes when a man through ignorance mistakes his rule, yet if his end be upright, he may be accepted notwithstanding. As the Apostle in *Rom.* 14. tells us of two sorts of Christians in that Church, some that understood their Gospel liberty, and Gospel rule of walking, and therefore did not observe days, nor confine themselves to eat herbs, as others did, but yet because in what the one and the other did, they had respect to God, they did both serve him; as he saith verse 6. *He that regardeth a day, regardeth it to the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day to the Lord, he doth not regard it.* And they were both living to the Lord; and so both living and dying they were both the Lord's; as he also speaks.

And now these few things being premised, I shall proceed to draw forth such inferences from the Point, as may most naturally spring from it, and be most sutable to the present day, and this honourable Assembly: And what may be needful by way of Argument to confirm it, I shall present in the Application, that so I may make the best improvement I can of a little time, and speak to your judgements and affections both together.

Use 1. And first, I shall infer hence something for Instruction. If this be to serve God, as you have heard, Then no man can serve God without the spirit of God. So that the generation of men that are indeed serving God in the world, are alone those that have received the spirit. God is a spirit, and

must be served in spirit, and no man can serve in spirit, but he that hath received the spirit. The Apostle in *Rom.* 7. 4. speaks of Believers that they were dead to their first husband the Law, that they might be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead: And why must they be thus married? That we might bring forth fruit unto God. By marrying with Christ, by our union with him, we come to partake of his Spirit and so to bring forth fruit unto God. The Spirit is that divine sap which is shed from Christ the root into those souls that are in union with him, whereby they bring forth fruit unto God.

And there is a threefold work of the Spirit that must pass upon man before he can be made a true servant.

1. A work of Conviction: He must be convinc'd of that absolute dependance he hath upon God; that he cannot subsist and live of himself without God: For until a man doth see his dependance, he will not serve. A man will not willingly subject himself to the will of one, upon whom he hath no dependance. Now a man without the spirit, his heart speaks that he can subsist of himself, by his own wit, wisdom, providence, industry, and creature Interest, and therefore he regards not God, he serves not God; but himself, or the creature, as thinking he depends more upon these then upon the Lord. And this is the reason that when men are to transact any work, they are careful about the means, but they look not at God, or very slightly; it is because they think they depend more upon the means then God; which is a piece of Atheism that grows in all our hearts; and those have found it, that are come to know their own hearts; and must be rooted up by the convictions of the Spirit, before man will indeed become the Lord's servant.

2. Yea again, He must also be convinc'd that in serving God there is the best reward. Every man before he enters upon work, is looking what his reward and wages shall be: As those in the Gospel that we read of in *Matth.* 20. 6, 7. being asked why they stood all the day long idle; they answered

swered, because no man hath hired us; they would not work till they had some promise of wages; now when man is throughly convinc'd that Gods work will have a reward, and the best reward; this inclines him and draws him to his service: now the Reward that God gives, it excels, 1. In the greatness of it, no reward can match it; what ever the Devil or the World may offer, yet God doth infinitely outbid them, what they offer is but a piece of light and fading vanity, but what God offers is a weight, an eternal weight of glory.

The Reward must needs be great, because God rewards not only according to mans work, but according to the riches of his own grace, and bounty: A great King accounts it his shame to give a mean reward, he must do all things like himself: It is said *Heb.* 11. 16. of those believing Patriarchs, *God was not ashamed to be called their God*; why? for saith the Text, *he hath prepared for them a City*; that is, if God had not well provided for them, if he had not prepared a glorious habitation for them, somewhat like himself, he might have been ashamed to be called their God: so

This Reward excels in the sureness of it. It will certainly come. Though we may fail of *success* in our work, yet we shall not misse the reward of it, as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks, *Isai.* 49. 4. *I have laboured in vain*, there he mist his success, *yet my judgment is with the Lord, and my works with my God*: there he finds the reward. And it is the Apostles argument, 1 *Cor.* 15. *ult.* let us abound in the work of the Lord, and the *Argument* is, not only because there is a reward, but the reward is sure; as *knowing that our labour is never in vain in the Lord.*

It is true God doth defer it, at least the greatest part of it; but why is it? that he might learn us to live upon *Trust*. He having given us such a sure promise, he may presume that we have enough to support and encourage us, though the reward be for a season deferred; Therefore saith the Apostle *Heb.* 10. 35. *Cast not away your confidence which hath great recompence of reward*: Oh, but we do not see the re-

compence, we poſſeſs it not; therefore he adds, *yet a little while, and he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry, and the juſt ſhall live by faith.*

2. The ſecond work of the ſpirit is a work of mortification, Mans ſelfiſh nature muſt be mortified; elſe he will be ſerving himſelf, and not the Lord. That life in a believer that ſerves the Lord, ſprings out of the death of his carnal life: as man ceaſeth to be his own, ſo doth he come to ſerve the Lord, and live to him.

The meſſage that *Moſes* carried to Pharaoh from the Lord was this, *Let my people go, that they may ſerve me*; they muſt go out of the Land of Egypt, and from under the power of *Pharaoh*, that they might ſerve the Lord.

So muſt man go out of that ſelfiſh nature that keeps him in bondage, and out of the power of the infernal *Pharaoh*, before he can be capable of ſerving God. And this is done in us by the Spirit, that ſmites thoſe enemies that held us in bondage, that we might go forth into the liberty of ſerving God; pride muſt be ſmitten, and ſelf-love muſt be ſmitten, and unbelief muſt be ſmitten, &c. before any man doth indeed enter into the Lords ſervice. No man, ſaith Chriſt, can ſerve two Maſters; eſpecially two Maſters whoſe commands are contradictory; now every luſt is a Maſter, which man is ſerving, and till the Spirit crucifie them, man cannot be ſerving Jeſus Chriſt.

3. The third work is a work of *renovation*, The faculties of the ſoul muſt paſs under a ſpiritual renovation before they can be fit to ſerve the Lord. For I am not of their opinion who think that if luſt be mortified, the ſoul would of it ſelf return into its primitive courſe; as a river that is ſtopt, if you remove the dam, it runs of it ſelf; or a ſtone that hangs in the ayr by a ſtring, if you cut the ſtring, of it ſelf it falls to the centre: but there muſt be *aliquid divinitus infuſum*, a principle infuſed from above to act it towards the Lord, and in his ſervice.

Luſt, it is a confining thing, it makes man dwell at home, and ſerve himſelf, but grace is enlarging, it lets man out

of

of himself, and brings him home to the Lord, and to the service of the Lord. He that is a fit servant for a Prince, must have many accomplishments to fit him for it: And so would I dwell here, I might shew you how many things are necessary to accomplish a man for the Lords service, as Faith, Love, Hope, Humility, Self denyal, &c. are all necessary; that he may be *a vessel of honour* prepared for his Masters use: For natural accomplishments may fit a man for the service of man, but man must be accomplisht from Heaven to fit him for the Lords service: But I passe. 2 Tim. 2. 21.

That which I infer next from the Doctrine, as more suitable to the day, is matter of Lamentation: Ah, may we not mourn over our selves, mourn over the City, mourn over the Nation, yea, mourn over the world, that that which is mans great work, is laid aside as if it was none of his work; at least other work hath the præeminence: Oh that the Devil that hath no true right to us, for he neither made us, nor bought us; and that payes no wages but death, and misery; and that the lusts of the flesh, to which as the Apostle saith, *we are no debtors*, yet these should have more real, more free, more chearful service then God, then Christ, to whom we are indebted by so manifold ingagements, and obligations! Use 2.

This is true, but ah, is it not sad? Hath not Christ, think you better deserved of the World? Hath he not? Might not Jesus Christ promise himself, that after he had manifested such stupendious love, as to lay down his life for an undone world, that they should be so amazed, so ravisht with this love, as to be ambitious who should love him most, and honour him most, and serve him most; that the very naming the name of Christ, should be argument enough to provoke them to ingage in any service for him.

Yea and after he had laid down the price of his blood, the greatest price that Heaven or Earth could give to purchase us, might he not promise himself, that the Sons of men would no longer be their own, but his, wholly his? But alasse,

alaſſe, we ſee nothing leſſe then this in the world. Men after all this are their own, live to themſelves, ſerve themſelves, and Chriſt and his ſervice both, are deſpiſed, and rejected of men, may not Heaven and Earth even tremble, and be aſtoniſht at this?

Or, when men are ſerving Chriſt, do they ſerve him with the beſt, do they ſerve him with ſuch life, and vigour, as they ſerve themſelves, and the world; do not they bring him the lame, the blind, the torn, the maymed, as if any thing was good enough for Chriſt; as *Jeroboam* made Prieſts of the loweſt of the People; ſo do men think the loweſt of their affections, the very dreg of their time and ſtrength good enough for God.

Was there ever ſuch love, as that which Chriſt ſhew'd to the world, and was there ever any carriage ſo unworthy, and ſo unſufferable as that which Chriſt receives from the World?

We have the Type of this in the Nation of the Jews. You know God did wonderfully for that people; brought them out of Egypt by an out ſtretched arm; and carried them through the wilderneſs by a continual miracle, and then ſetled them in a pleaſant land, ſuch a land as could not, for, all things, be matched by any upon earth; might not now God expect, think you, eminent love and ſervice from ſuch a people: but when they come into the good land, they preſently defile it with their Idolatries, they forget the workes of God: and as the Prophet *Jeremy* expreſſeth it, *They ſay not, where is the Lord that brought us out of the Land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderneſs?* &c. So after all the wonderfull works of power and love that Chriſt hath wrought for the redemption of man, and for the ſetling him in an heavenly inheritance, Oh how much is this Chriſt forgotten; How few are there that ſay, where is this Jeſus that hath done theſe things; Oh where is he, that we may adorn him, that we may embrace him, that we may devote our ſelves, and all that we are and have to him: Ah, muſt not this be for a Lamentation this day, may we not lament upon

upon Christs account, that he should be so much despised, and his service neglected, and upon the worlds account, that they should no better understand their own Interest, then to be serving other Masters and cast him off.

But to come a little nearer home, May not we particularly mourn over our selves, and the Nation this day? Oh the mercies that England hath received! But have we not too soon, too soon forgotten them? Hath God been served under his mercy, and served with his mercy as he should have been? Do we ask after the God of our mercies, and say, Where is the God of all these mercies? Where is that God that delivered us from the Bondage of Popery and Superstition in Queen *Marys* days; and from those ensnaring Ceremonies, and superstitious Innovations in the late Prelats days? Where is that God that appeared for us at *Keinton*, *Newberry*, *Naseby*, *Dunbar*, *Worcester*, &c.?

Might not God promise himself, that when he had delivered us out of the hands of our enemies, *we would serve him without fear, in righteousness and holiness all the days of our life*? But do we so?

And that when he had delivered us from those innovations that were intruded into his Worship, he should have a pure worship, and pure Ordinances set up amongst us; and a joyful and holy walking in them: But is it thus?

And that when once the danger of Saints meeting together, called *Conventicling*, was removed, they would fall into a sweet and blessed communion and fellowship among themselves: But alas is it thus?

As also might not God expect that those which suffered together, and were delivered together, should joyn heart and hand together, to promote the common Interest of Christ against the Common Enemy: But is this found amongst us?

God told the Jews, *Zach.* 8. 19. that he would deliver them, and turn the Fasts of the fourth, fifth, and seventh moneth into joy and gladness, and cheerful Feasts; and that therefore they should love the Truth, and Peace.

God

God hath done much toward our deliverance, we must not, we dare not deny it; we inherit the fruit of the Prayers and blood of many of his precious Saints: But after all, Do we love the *Truth*, and *Peace*? Is *Truth* embraced? Is *Peace* preserved? Nay, Is not the light of Truth darkned by pernicious Errors, and the beauty of Peace sadly defaced by unhappy divisions? And must not these things be for a Lamentation this day?

I remember when the *Book of Sports* came out in the late Kings days, there was a general lamentation among the good people of the Land, and a holy zeal for the spiritual observation of the Christian Sabbath; But now, How many have set their Consciences free from any such duty, and others are running back to the Jewish Sabbath, and that more then every one is aware of? And the first step to fall to the latter, must be the casting off the former.

Use 3. That which I shall next infer from the Truth in hand, is, with all seriousnes to exhort and beseech, that that which is our *greatest work*, may be *most* minded. And seeing that (*Honoured in the Lord*) you have appointed us to be this day your *SPEAKERS*, to speak to God for you, and to speak from God to you: give me leave to enjoy that which is the *Priviledge* of this House, to speak freely. And I shall be bold to speak to you, as standing before the Lord this day, in a threefold *capacity*. 1. As *Men*. 2. As *Christians*. 3. As *Magistrates*, and the *TRUSTEES* of the three Nations.

First, I shall speak to you as men; and as men you are engaged to serve the Lord: For,

First, Have you not received your *Beings* from him? Hath not he made you, and not *you your selves*? Doth not then the *Law of Creation* engage you to serve him by whom you are, or else you had never been?

There are certain Duties which *Divines* call Natural Worship, which the light of Nature doth dictate to men, and are due to him by the very Law of Creation; as to love God, fear him, trust him; so also to *serve* him, and refer

our

our actions to him, which God never did, nor never will *dispense* with to the sons of men: So that he that lives in the world, and is not truly serving God in the world, this man sins against the very *Dictates* of natural light, and against the *Original* and *Fundamental* right which God claims to us, as being his creatures, and the work of his hands. Shall the thing that is formed say to him that formed it, What hast thou to do with me? And, wherein am I indebted to thee? Shall not God enjoy his own *Creature*? And doth he enjoy it, if it is not serving him?

Secondly, As man was made by the *Lord*, so he was made peculiarly for the Lord; He made the rest of the Creation to serve man, but he made man to serve himself. He furnish'd him with such *Faculties* of mind, that rendred him capable of *knowing*, *praising*, and *serving* his Creator: and is there but this one creature in this lower world that God made *peculiarly* to serve him, and shall he be disappointed in that one?

Nay, shall the rest of the Creatures keep their *station*, and serve their end, and man not serve his?

When God would *Arraigne* a people that was rebellious against him, he calls Heaven and Earth to hearken, *Isa.* 1. 2. *Hear O Heavens, and hearken O Earth*: Why? What strange thing hath God to bring forth? Why this; *I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me!* As if he had said, Is there such a thing to be found out in the whole Creation, that any creature which God had made, maintained, and shewed his power and goodness in, should rebel against him? *O Heavens!* Is there any such thing to be found with you? *O Earth!* Is there any such thing to be found in thee? May not the *Heavens*, and the *Luminaries* above, rise up against man, and say, We have observed our *place*, kept our *distances*, runs our *race*, pour'd down our *influences* according to the *Law* set us in our Creation? May not the Earth rise up and say, I have stood firm upon my *Basis*, I have brought forth my *increase*, I have been *serviceable* to man's *being*, and man's *delight*, by

those varieties of fruits I have brought forth to him, sweet to his *taste*, fragrant to his *smell*, and beautiful to his *sight*, and that with a new *Edition* every year? Here are now the creatures serving thee, *O man*, and what, art not thou serving the Lord? Do *they* hand up that service which they owe to thee, and wilt not *thou* hand up that service which thou owest to God? Shall the work *stick* at thee? What? at thee! It is observable that which we read in *Gen.* 1. That God did not say of the works that he had made, that they were *very good*, until he had made man; he saw them to be good before, but now very good; for God had now made a *creature* that was to be the lord of the Creation, and that was made capable of bringing in to him the glory of his works, and so took the greater pleasure in them upon that account: and therefore man ought to be careful that God be not disappointed in him.

Thirdly, It is mans *Excellency* and *Glory* to serve the Lord.

The *excellency* of every thing lies in its serving its end; as of a *knife* in cutting, a *pen* in writing, *&c.* Now man being made for the Lord, as his end; it is his *excellency* to be serving him.

It is *natural* to man to seek after *Excellency*. *Omne desiderium ad superiora tendit.* Some men seek for it in a *great estate*, others in *Rule* and *Dominion*, others in *Wisdom* and *Learning*, &c. according to mens several *Constitutions* and *Apprehensions*, so they seek after several *excellencies*: but true *excellency* consists in a mans upright and faithful serving his End. He that doth most eminently serve the Lord in his *generation*, this man doth most excel.

Solomon saith, *Prov.* 12. 26. *The righteous is more excellent than his Neighbour*: and this is the thing wherein he excels, because it is he only that is serving the Lord. In other things his neighbour may excel him.

The *commendation* that God gives to *Moses* at his *Funeral* was this, that he was the *servant of the Lord*, Gen. 34. 5, 6. *So Moses the servant of the Lord died; and he buried him*

him in a Valley, in the land of Moab, &c. The *Spirit* of God might have ſtiled him *Moſes* the *Honourable*, *Moſes* the *Prince*, *Moſes* the *Scholar*, *Moſes* the *Beautiful*; But this was *Moſes* his chief *excellency*, that he was the *Servant* of the Lord. Though other *excellencies* may commend man more to the world, yet this is that which *commends* man to God.

Fourthly, Conſider this, not to ſerve the Lord is the higheſt *Injuſtice*: We with-hold that from God which is his *Due*: For ſervice is a debt that we owe him, and ſhall we dare to rob God?

What ſaith the Prophet *Malachy*, *chap.* 3. *ver.* 8. *Will a man rob God?* Scarce could there be found among the Heathen any ſo *profane* and *ſacrilegious*, as to dare to rob their *gods*, though they were but dumb Idols; and ſhall any man dare then to rob the living God? To give away that ſervice to Mammon, to Satan, to encroaching luſts, which of due belongs unto him.

Give unto Caſar the things which are Caſars, and unto God the things that are Gods.

Caſar expects to have his due; if men do not give it, *Caſar* will take it: and what then ſhall not God much more have his due? And will he not ſeverely require it at their hands that do with-hold it?

Parliaments are the *Supreme Courts of Juſtice*, the *Fountains* from whence *Juſtice* and *Judgement* are to run down like a ſtream throughout the Nation; and ſhall you (Right Honourable) you that are Fountains of Juſtice, be guilty of that high Injuſtice your ſelves, as not to reſign up your ſelves, and all that you are and have, to the ſervice of God, which is the debt you owe him, and the Due, he expects from you?

Fifthly, Again, Conſider this, (for I yet ſpeak to you as men) if ye do not *ſerve* the Lord, this is that which will deſtroy you: for if a thing will not ſerve its *end*, we caſt it away: If a *Pen* will not write, if a *Knife* will not cut, if a *Needle* will not ſowe, we caſt them away; for what are

they good for, when they do not ſerve their End?

So when we plant a *Tree* to bring forth Fruit, and it become barren, we cut it down, and make *fuel* of it for the fire; it doth not anſwer our end. So hath God made man to be as a *Tree of Righteouſneſs*, to bring forth the fruit of ſervice and obedience to him; and if he proves *barren*, and ſerves not God's end; Will he not ſay as Chriſt of the barren Fig-tree? *Cut it down, Why cumbreth it the ground?* Thoſe men ſhall become fuel to God's *juſtice*, that will not be ſervants to his will and glory. Luke 13. 7.

Was not this that which deſtroyed the *old World?* The Lord had made man to ſerve himſelf; but when the Lord ſaw that *mankind* was degenerated, and that they were become a generation of Rebels, the Lord *repented* that he made him; as we repent of any work we have done, when therein we do not attain our end: And hereupon it was that God deſtroyed him from off the face of the Earth.

It is a true ſaying, *In nihilum valet, quod non valet in finem ſuum*: That is good for nothing, that doth not avail to its end: So that as we would not be caſt away, and cut down, and deſtroyed, it doth concern us to be careful that we ſerve our end, which is to ſerve the Lord.

Sixthly, In the next place, conſider, If a man doth not ſerve the Lord, *he is ſpending his money for that which is not bread, and his labour for that which ſatisfieth not.* For if a man doth not ſerve the Lord, the fruit that he will reap of all his other ſervice, will not ſatisfie him. Every man expects when he comes to receive the fruit of his *travel*, to find ſomthing that may be as *bread* for his ſoul to feed upon, and be ſatisfied; now no travel, no labour, but that which is expended in *ſerving* God, will bring in that fruit which may give reſt to the ſoul of man; becauſe it can fetch him in but ſome *Finite* good, which is too narrow to ſatisfie the ſoul.

Solomon in the Book called the *Eccleſiaſtes*, gives us a *Catalogue* of the ſeveral *vanities* that he had obſerved under the Sun; and one is this, which he mentions *chap.* 6. *verſ.* 7.

All

All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the belly is not filled. Man labours and toyls, and yet he hath not out of all his labour, that which can fill his appetite: His appetite is capable of more then his labour can bring him in, which was a vanity he obſerved.

But now he that is in *ſincerity* ſerving the Lord, when he comes to enjoy the fruit, and the reward of his ſervice, he ſhall find that which will be *ſatisfaction* to his ſoul; for he ſhall find God himſelf both in that ſervice, and eſpecially at the end of the ſervice.

As the *good ſervant* in the Goſpel that had faithfully ſerved the Lord, was bid to enter into his *Maſters joy*: Other ſervants that are ſerving the *World*, and ſerving their *Luſts*, may enter into the joy of the *creature*, and the joy and pleaſure of *ſin*, but not into the joy of the Lord, which is only that joy that can ſatisfie the heart of man.

Laſtly, conſider this, If a man doth not ſerve the Lord, he doth not *Live*: I ſay again, he doth not *live*. It is true, take life in a large ſenſe, ſo it is the whole activity of the *Reaſonable Soul*, diſplaying it ſelf in the ſeveral actions of man in the world: But take life in a ſtricter and *Theological* ſenſe, and ſo it is the *activity* of the ſoul, diſplaying it ſelf by the power of the *holy Ghoſt*, in the ſervice of God. So that when the ſervice of God is the *Sphere*, and the Spirit the *Principle* of the ſouls activity, this is moſt truly and properly life.

The Apoſtle ſaith of the *Widdow* that liveth in pleaſure, *She is dead while ſhe liveth.*

The *Widdow* indeed, *She ſerveth God day and night*, as he ſaid before: But ſhe that liveth in pleaſure, not ſerving God, is dead whiles ſhe liveth. 1 Tim. 5. 6.

I ſuppoſe you have heard the ſtory of him that was converted in the latter end of his days, and therefore would have this Inſcription upon his Tomb after his death, *Diu fui in Mundo, parum vixi*: I have been long in the world, but I have lived but a little: For that life which man lives whiles he is ſerving himſelf, and acting his luſts, and promoting

ting his own carnall interests is so far differing from that life which he at first received from God in innocency, that it is quite another, and not that life, as if he that had lived the life of a man should come to live the life of a beast: as *Nebuchadnezzar* did, you would say this is another, and not the same life: So that when a man is in *singerity* serving the Lord, this is his original life, and his only true life.

Thus I have spoken to you as *men*, and the ingagements you see that lie upon you, on that lowest account are very strong, to be serving the Lord; but those that follow are yet stronger, wherein, I shall speak to you:

2. Secondly, as *Christians*. Christians I mean, not in the *largest* sence, as *Baptized* only into the name of Christ, but in a *stricter* sence, as *Baptized* into his Spirit; for I believe I speak to many such at this time; and as such, you are peculiarly ingaged to serve the Lord. For,

1. First, you are those that the Lord hath *bought*; *peculiarly* bought, for though Christ in a more general sence, hath *purchased* all men, yea the whole creation; for his *Lordship* and *dominion* over all creatures, comes in upon him upon the account of his death; yet his death, and the *purchase* of it, doth more peculiarly relate to his people, *Being the Saviour of all men, yet especially of those that believe*: Now the Apostle argues, 1 *Cor.* 5. last, concerning the believing Corinthians, *Ye are not your own*, why? *For ye are bought with a price*: What then? *Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are the Lords.*

As a *servant* that is but hired, is ingaged to serve his *Master*, how much more if *bought* with his money, as those *servants* under the Law. So that the Lord hath a stronger *title* to you then others; as being not only his by the more common right of *Creation*, but the more peculiar right of purchase: And the price that purchased you is not *Silver and Gold*, which yet are accounted the most precious things in nature, but the *blood* of Christ, the *blood* of God, which is indeed the greatest that *Heaven or Earth* could yeeld. So that Gods expectation cannot but be greater upon his people

ple then upon any others, that whoever *deny* him *ſervice*, yet that they ſhould yeild it to him.

And ſo ſaith the ſame Apoſtle 2 *Cor.* 5. 14, 15. *If one died for all, then were all dead*, &c. *that they which live ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him that died, and roſe again.*

As if he ſhould ſay, we were indeed all dead, but we are purchaſed from death into life by Jeſus Chriſt; and this life now, we are not to live it to our ſelves, but unto him by whoſe death we come to live.

2. As Chriſtians you are *Married to the Lord.* He hath *divorced* you from your firſt *Husband*, which is the *Fleſh*, which you were in League with, and obedient to, and he hath married you to himſelf.

Now why are you thus married, the Apoſtle tels you *Rom.* 7. 4. *We are married to him, that is raiſed from the dead, that we ſhould bring forth fruit to God*: We are married to Chriſt *Crucified*, that we might be dead to ſin; and to Chriſt *raiſed from the dead*, that we might live a new life, which is, *to bring forth fruit to God.*

As we know in *Marriage*, a man marries a wife, that ſhe might bring forth her fruit, as by *himſelf*, and not by another, ſo to *himſelf*, and not to another alſo: Now this is to ſerve the Lord, when the *fruit* we bring forth, we bring it forth not to our ſelves, but unto him.

And we know alſo by the *Law* of marriage the wife is not her *own*, but her Husbands, and *hath not power over her own body, but the Husband*, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks 1 *Cor.* 7. 4. So is the caſe here, ye that are married to the Lord, the Law of that ſpiritual *Relation* doth take you off from being your own, or having a power over your ſelves, ſo as to be ſerving your ſelves; and doth ingage you to be the Lords, and to be *ſerving* him.

3. As Chriſtians, and Saints, he hath beſtowed more coſt and *workmanſhip* upon you then upon others, he hath formed you for himſelf.

He hath *Created* you again. So ſaith St. *Paul*, *Eph.* 2. 10.

We

We are his workmanship; why? So are all Creatures: but he adds, *Created in Christ Jesus*; we have a new creation in him: but to what are we created? *To good works, that we should walk in them*, and what is that, but to be serving the Lord?

Why was it that the Lord did so expect fruit from his *Vineyard*, *Isaiah* 5, and so wondred when he found it not, it was because he had bestowed so much cost and work upon it? *He had fenced it, and gathered out the stones of it, and planted it with the choicest vine*, &c. THEN he looked it should bring grapes. Had not the Lord bestowed so much *workmanship* upon it, he would not have had such expectation upon it. God expects better and greater things from his people then from others, that they should do that which is *singular*, and serve him at a more *Spiritual* and *excellent* rate then others either do or can, and that upon the account of that *workmanship* he hath bestow'd upon them.

It is said 1 *Kings* 10. 12. That King *Salomon* made of *Almug-trees* Psalteries and Harps for Singers, to praise the Lord. So all the spiritual carving and polishing that God bestowes upon the Spirits of his people, is but to make them instruments of service and praise to himself.

4. Consider again, Doth not the *Law of Love*, as you are Christians, ingage you to be *serving* the Lord? How can we say we *love* Christ if we do not serve him? The Nature of love is to *deny* it self, and *overlook* it self, that it may serve the person beloved. *Amor est Donum Amantis in amatum.* Through love, the true lover bestowes *himself* upon his beloved. and if *himself* much more his service. οὐκ ἐῶν ἑαυτῶν εἶναι τοὺς ἐραστὰς: as that *Ancient* speaks, *it suffers not a man to be his own.* Now can we justifie it to *Christ* or our own *Consciences* that we love him, if we bestow not our selves in a way of *service* upon him?

What is the reason that men are so serving themselves? is it not because they *love* themselves? It is this self love that doth confine man within himself, and makes his *charity* not only, (according to the Proverb) to *begin* at home, but to

end

end at home also: But now when man doth indeed love the Lord, this same carries him out of himself, and *resigns* him up to the Lord, and all that he is and hath, to be serviceable to the Lord.

Lastly, How can we say that Christ reigns in our hearts, if we are not serving the Lord? For the great end of Christs reigning, is to *subdue* in man his *self-ish Nature*, whereby he is serving himself; that the Lord that hath right to him, may have service from him.

Christ is made *Lord* of the Creation, is set up *King* of all the Earth, that he might make the Creation serviceable to God; that God might have the glory of his works come into him through his Son; So is he set up King in the heart of man, that he might smite those *Enemies* that had carried him from God, and his service; and subdue his *Reason*, his *Will*, his *Affections*, and his whole man to the *obedience* and *service* of God. And it is an undoubted Truth, That as Christ's *Reigne* and *Kingdom* prevails in the heart of man, so doth he cease from himself, and is serving the Lord.

Thus I have spoken to you also in the second capacity, as Christians; and now give me leave also to speak a few words to you in that capacity wherein you meet in this House, that is, as Magistrates, or Parliament-men.

And in this more *Publique* and *Politique* capacity you are to serve the Lord: For every *Talent* that is in our hands, we are to improve it for our Masters use. For what is a Talent, but any *Ability* or *Opportunity* that is in the hand of man, whereby he may be useful to the praise and service of God: And where there are more *Talents*, there will be the more required.

He that had but one Talent in the *Parable*, was severely punish'd, because he hid that one in the Earth, and improv'd it not: But suppose that he that had the five *Talents*, should have hid them all five, Should he not have been punish'd five times more?

Men that have great *Eſtates*, great *Authority*, great *Intereſts*, and act in a wider *Sphere* then other men; as they have greater advantages in their hand, ſo their ſin, and their *puniſhment* will be greater, if they (I do not ſay abuſe them, for the *unprofitable Servant* did not ſo, but) neglect them, and improve them not.

The Magiſtrates of the world, *Kings, and Judges of the Earth*, are particularly called upon to ſerue the Lord, in the Text; and to *Kiſs the Son* in the next verſe; For whatever power they have, even as ſuch, is derived from Chriſt the *Mediator*; *By whom Kings Reigne, and Princes Decree Judgement*. For Chriſt is not only King of his *Church*, but King of the *World*; and ſo the powers of the world are derived from him, and are to be ſubordinate and ſubjected to his honour; and (ſo far as they are concerned) to the Affairs of his Kingdom in the Earth.

I intend not to enter that perplex controverſie of the *Magiſtrate's* power in matters of Religion, about which I find a double *Extream*; The one in that opinion of *ERASTUS*, that would have no other Government in the Church, but that of the Civil Magiſtrate, and his power to interpoſe, even in the *Intrinſick* affairs thereof.

The other is that of the *Jeſuites*, whoſe *Maxime* is, *Magiſtratus nil ſtatuat de Religione*. And I have heard it aſſerted, That nothing of the firſt Table, or of the *Souls* of men, doth at all fall under his cognizance: which I humbly conceive to be an Extreme on the other hand: For without queſtion, ſomthing may and ought to be done by the Magiſtrate, to the befriending of the Goſpel, and its *progreſs* in the world.

I ſhall only ſpeak of thoſe things which I think moſt ſober men will grant; becauſe it is a tender point.

1. Without queſtion he is to do nothing to hinder the preaching and ſpreading the Goſpel within his Dominion: For the true Goſpel hath a right to be preached in all Nations. The Apoſtles had a *Commiſſion* from him that was *King of kings, and Lord of lords*, To *Go and teach all Nati-*

ons

ons; and therefore they might by vertue of their Royal Commiſſion from him, demand of the ſubordinate Kings and Rulers of the Earth a free and un-interrupted paſſage through their ſeveral *Dominions*, for the publiſhing of this Goſpel, in any part of them. And they were not to be accounted *Intruders*, in any *Nation*, or any *City*, which they might enter into for the diſcharge of their Commiſſion.

2. Becauſe the Goſpel hath ſuch a *Right*, Magiſtrates ought not only to ſuffer it, but to remove outward Obſtructions that may lie in its way, and that may hinder the paſſage and progreſs thereof: And he doth but that which is to have a free paſſage through the world.

So that if any ſhould ſhut their dores againſt the preaching of it, he may *command* them to be opened; If any ſhould lay *hands* upon the Diſpenſers of it, to reſtrain them in their work, he may command that they be ſet at liberty; if any *diſturb* and *interrupt* them in their work, he may forbid all ſuch diſturbances: Yea, if the people will not come to hear it preached, but be ſpending their time in drinking and revelling, and the like, when they ſhould be attending upon it, he may command them to give their attendance upon it, at leaſt in one place or another; eſpecially ſuch as own the Chriſtian profeſſion, as we do generally in this Nation.

3. He is not only to remove obſtructions, but he ought to countenance and encourage the true *Preachers* and *Miniſters* of the Goſpel in their *preaching*, and the *Profeſſors* of the Goſpel in their *profeſſion*. He is to take them under the wing of his Government, and to protect them in their juſt *Liberties* againſt all oppoſers; and to furniſh them with convenient places for their meetings, and publique Worſhip; and to provide what *maintenance* may be neceſſary for the furtherance of the preaching the Goſpel, and ſpreading of it, as *Conſtantine* did in his time. And all this he is to do, becauſe of that *Supream* Right that the Goſpel hath from him that is the King of the Earth, to be publiſhed in the world.

4. But laſtly, He may alſo upon the ſame account inhibite

the divulging and propagating of any principles, opinions, or *religion* so called, which will directly tend to the undermining and subverting of this Gospel: For it is only the true Gospel that hath a right to be propagated, and received in the world. So that the Magistrate is under no ingagement to any *Religion*, but the true *Religion*; any Gospel, but the true Gospel, any *profession* but the true *profession*; for that only hath a right, as I said, to be propagated and entertained.

So that if any man will come and preach another Gospel, then what the Apostles, had a commission from Christ to preach, and will preach such *Doctrine* as will tend to the *undermining* of it. The Magistrate is under no ingagement to give to that, liberty; much lesse countenance, but rather to restrain it, because it is not that Gospel, and that true revelation of the mind of God, which he hath decreed to be entertained of men.

If a man will come and preach up Paganisme, Turcisme, Judaisme, Papisme; yea and to go farther, Pelagianisme, Socinianisme, or Arminianisme, in the grosser points of it, and claim liberty, and protection from the *Magistrate* in so doing, let him shew by what right he would claim this liberty: for where can he shew that ever any man had a commission from Christ to preach up these religions or opinions in the world.

I would be understood to speak only of those opinions, that do undermine the true Gospel, and that way of truth which God hath revealed for the salvation of the world; and which may be accounted in the number of those *Heresies* that are damnable, and not of lesser mistakes either in point of *Doctrine* or *Discipline* wherein the godly both have and may differ: for in things that are doubtful, or not fully certain, there ought to be a forbearance, least the truth be restrained in stead of errour.

Neither have I pleaded for the punishing of any mans person meerly, because he holds this or that opinion; what I have said is that the Magistrate is under no ingagement to

errour

errour as errour, or to give liberty to the spreading of those opinions, that raise the Foundation of our Christian Religion.

Object. 1. But there are such *controversies* in religion, that we know not how to be sure what is a truth, or what is errour; and so we may oppose *truth* in stead of errour, and make way to errour in stead of *truth*.

Answer. Are we not sure that the *Christian Religion*, is the true Religion: if we are not sure of that we leave our soules in a *desperate* hazard, and lie sadly open to the snares and temptations of the *Devil*, and of men *Cunning* to deceive.

But if you say, you are sure the *Christian Religion* is the true Religion, may you not then be sure also of those *great* truths, which are as the *pillars* upon which it stands? May we not be sure that *Jesus Christ* is the true *Messiah*, and that he was really in the *nature* of man, and that in that nature he suffered death for the *Redemption* of the world?

May we not be sure, that he is risen from the dead, and lives for ever, making intercession in that nature wherein he died? and that he will come again to judg the world?

May we not be sure that the *Scriptures* are the written word of God, and the *rule* of our Faith and obedience, by which all light in the hearts or Doctrines of men is to be examined?

Again, may we not be sure that we are *justified* by Faith, and not by the works of the Law?

May not we be sure, that there shall be a *Resurrection* of mens bodies at the last day, and that some shall rise to eternal life, and others to go into *everlasting* fire, &c.

If we cannot be sure of such things as these, my preaching may be vain, and your Faith also vain.

Object. But the Magistrate is not to determine what is truth and what is errour.

Answ. 1. I do not say he is to determine, yet I say he is to be instructed, as the Text speaks, and to know which is the true Religion, and the great truths upon which it is built

built, and when he knows them, he is to give freedom, countenance, and what furtherance he may to them. And if ſome Magiſtrates have through ignorance, or prejudice, turned their power againſt the truth; yet it was their duty to have improved their power for it in thoſe wayes, and upon that ground that I before mentioned. His ignorance and inability to diſcharge his duty, doth not at all exempt him from it.

Thus I have ſhewn briefly, and I hope clearly, wherein the Magiſtrate may befriend the Goſpel, and the true Religion; and ſo upon that account be ſerving the Lord.

There are other things alſo of another nature, wherein he may ſerve the Lord;

As in ſuppreſſing open vice, and wickedneſs, putting down thoſe *houſes* that are the *nouriſhers* and maintainers of them, I mean diſorderly *Ale-houſes* and *Taverns*, whereof we have yet too too great a ſtore every where. Something I perceive hath been done upon that account in the Countries, and I could wiſh they were a little more *narrowly* lookt after in the City.

God had a ſad *controverſie* with *Eli*, though a good man, that when his Sons did wickedly, he reſtraind them not: He was a *Magiſtrate*, and though he could not change their hearts, yet he might have reſtraind their practiſe. And I think this will ſomewhat befriend the Goſpel, and the paſſage of it among us.

1 Sam. 3. 13.

And then as for other things wherein you may ſerve the Lord, as *Enacting* righteous Laws, doing juſtice, and judgment, relieving the oppreſt, *eſtabliſhing* the Liberties of the Nation, ſo far as may conſiſt with the juſt liberties of the people of God, and the *ſecurity* of that cauſe, wherein the godly of the Nation have been, and yet are ſo deeply intereſted, that our motion may not be *Retrograde*, and we looſe the things that we have wrought.

As alſo for the carrying on your affairs at Sea, and the war wherein you are ingaged with Spain, wherein you would ask *counſel* from Heaven this day, it is not for me to adviſe

advise any thing in these things, they being so much out of my *sphere*; I shall only say, The Lord direct you.

Yet only this I shall say, that the *Monarchy* you have to do against, is deeply defiled with blood, and with that blood which hath the loudest cry; and when its iniquity is at the full, and its defence taken off, it shall be, as *Caleb* said of the Canaanites, but as *bread* for those Instruments that God shall employ to take vengeance.

Only let me bold humbly to advise you, as that which is of the greatest *concernment* to the success of your Affairs, That you would *Interest* God as much as may be in them all: For seeing you are men that do pretend to God in what you do, and have his *Name* upon you, you are to expect your success to come in, not in a common way of *Providence*, but in a way of prayer, faith, and sincere serving him in all your undertakings. This is the third Inference.

Fourthly, I shall infer somthing by way of *Tryal* in a word or two, that we may a little know our own hearts, and whom we are serving whether our selves, or the Lord. You may know it,

First by this. If you serve the Lord in what you do, then you expect your *Reward* principally from him: for the thing or the person that man is serving, from the same doth he expect his reward, He that is serving *man*, expects his reward from *man*; He that is serving *mammon*, from *mammon* he looks for his reward: And he that is serving the *Lord*, he expects also his chief reward from the *Lord*: And the *sence* of that reward which he shall have from God, is the motive that quickens him more in his work, then any he may receive from man.

Secondly, He that serves the Lord in what he doth, hath his eye upon him as his *ultimate* end. He that looks no farther then himself, this man is serving himself; let his work be what it will be, as I said before. But when the Lord is *Finis operis*, the end of the work; or at least *Finis operantis*, the end of him that worketh, then is the Lord served.

Lastly, He that serves the Lord, he endeavours to *manage* his

his work ſo, as it may be moſt ſerviceable to him. If a *Miniſter* uprightly ſerve the Lord, he will preach the Word, and manage the whole courſe of his Miniſtry, not in ſuch a way as may be moſt pleaſing to men, but moſt to the good of ſouls, and the honour and ſervice of Chriſt: And ſo I may ſay of Magiſtrates, and of private Chriſtians; if they are ſerving the Lord, they then will ſo endeavour to act, and ſo ſteer the whole courſe of their life, as that the Lord may be moſt ſerved and honoured by them.

Uſe 5. The laſt thing I infer from the Doctrine, is, encouragement and comfort to the *good and faithful ſervant*. The ſervice of the Lord, though we may ſuffer reproach in it, yet it is the moſt honourable; and loſs in it, yet it is the moſt gainful; and pain and trouble in it, yet it is the moſt pleaſant ſervice in the world.

Ah (much honoured Senators) you that are in the integrity of your hearts ſerving the Lord, beſides all that peace and pleaſure that you may have at preſent, there is a day coming, wherein all your ſervice and labour of love will be returned into your Boſoms an hundred fold.

Oh how *honourably* doth that man live, and how bleſſedly ſhall that man die, that hath been doing the Lord's work in the world!

Bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord, &c. *for they reſt from their labours, and their works follow them*. Rev. 14. 13. their works are ceaſed as to the labour of them, but follow them, and will be with them for ever, as to the reward of them.

The rich mans *riches* ſhall not follow him, the voluptuous mans *pleaſures* ſhall not follow him, nor the *honours* of the honourable ſhall not follow them; but the faithful ſervants works ſhall follow him, and be with him for ever.

It is ſaid of *David*, *that after he had ſerved his generation according to the will of God, he fell aſleep*, Acts 13. 36. How ſweetly may that man lay *himſelf* down in the ſleep of death, that hath in his life been ſerving his *generation* according to the will of God.

The

The *Lord* himself will give *Testimony* to such a man, as he doth to the faithful servant in the *Parable*; *Well done thou good and faithful servant.* For a Magistrate, for a Minister, for a Christian to have an *Euge* from Christ; for the Lord himself to give an *honourable Testimony* to a man, and his service, is the truest honour, and the highest commendation. And though he be but a servant, yet his Master will make him sharer with himself, and that in the best thing which he hath, which is his joy; *Enter thou into thy Masters joy*: And is not this *enough* to encourage you? Mat. 25. 21.

But yet, if a *bigger word* then this can be spoken, we have an expression or two falling from Christ's own mouth, and recorded by *Luke*, chap. 12. which I cannot think of without wonder.

The one you find in the 43, 44. verses, *Blessed is that servant whom the Lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him Ruler over all that he hath.* Can any thing be spoken more? Yes, in ver. 37. we have a *greater* word then this, which I durst not have spoke, if Christ had not spoken it himself: *Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching; Verily I say unto you, he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.*

In the former expression he saith, That all that he hath shall be at their service; and that is very much: But in this latter, he saith a great deal more; That he himself will gird himself, and put himself as into the posture of a servant, and *come forth and serve them.* And now, *Beloved*, who would not be the Lord's servant.

And thus I have spoken to the matter of the counsel here given to the *Kings* and *Judges* of the Earth, which is, to *Serve the Lord.*

I shall next in a word speak to the *manner*, how the Lord is to be served; and that the Text saith, is *with Fear. Serve the Lord with fear.*

Though they are *Kings*, and *Judges*, and are a Terror to others, yet even they muſt ſerve the Lord with *fear*; and though they are men that uſually have the greateſt *defence* about them, yet lie as open and naked to God as any others, and therefore muſt *ſerve* with fear.

Queſt. *But what fear is this they are to ſerve with? and of what?*

Anſw. For the former queſtion, the *Apoſtle* reſolves it in that parallel Scripture, *Heb.* 12. 28. *Let us have grace, whereby we may ſerve God with Reverence, and Godly Fear.* There is a baſe ſlaviſh fear that makes a man run from God, and have hard thoughts of him, and binds him up from ſerving him.

As the *unprofitable ſervant*, if he ſpeak his heart, was bound up from employing his *Talent* by this baſe fear: *Matth.* 25. 24, 25. *Lord*, ſaith he, *I knew thee, that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou haſt not ſown*, &c. *and I was afraid.*

But the *fear* wherewith we are to ſerve God, is an ingenuous Son-like fear: Such a fear as

1. Springs from Love, and that *Honourable* eſteem we have of God, which in *Hebr.* 12. is called Reverence: which Moraliſts tell us, is an affection compounded of love and fear; and is wrought in the heart by a due ſenſe of that *greatneſs* and *goodneſs* which is in God.

2. Which quickens a man in *ſervice*: For this true Fear, is a ſtrong *Incentive* to action. The Apoſtle to quicken thoſe dull *Hebrews* in their travel to the true Reſt, doth endeavour to poſſeſs them with this holy Fear, *Heb.* 4. 1. *Let us therefore fear, leſt a promiſe being left us of entring into his reſt, any of us ſhould ſeem to come ſhort of it.* Security rocks the ſoul aſleep, but *Fear* awakens it, and ſets it a work.

Queſt. 2. But what are they to be in fear of?

Anſw. The verſe after this *Text* doth in *general* tell us; and

and that is, the *Lords* displeasure, *lest he be angry, and you perish* saith the Text, and that, *if his wrath be kindled but a little*, what then if he should stir up all his wrath? as the *Psalmist* speakes.

This *fear* is to possesse every mans heart, and is to run through all the *Actions* of his life.

1. For natural actions, as eating, drinking, &c. we are to manage these with an holy fear of displeasing the Lord.

2. For *Civil* and *Political* actions, as buying, selling, trading and commerce in the world; him we are also to fear least we displease him.

3. As for *Religious* actions, praying, or hearing, &c. we are to mannage these with this holy fear, least we displease the Lord by formality, *distraction* of thoughts, hypocrisy, *carelesnes*, or the like.

But especially *Magistrates*, for they are the persons particularly spoken to in the Text. They are to mannage the whole *course* of their Government with this fear of displeasing the Lord. They are all *subordinated* to him, and are to give up their accounts to him, and therefore are to be exceeding careful that nothing in the *constitution*, or course of their Government be displeasing unto him. And they do displease Christ.

1. When they *oppose* his *interest* in the world, when Christ hath a work upon the *wheeles* for the advance of his Kingdom, the establishing of *Jerusalem*, &c. then, when they oppose their *power* to this interest, then they displease him. As when *Maximilian* the Emperour, and some other *Princes* opposed Luther in that great work he was upon.

2. Secondly, when they *neglect* his interest, when they do not come forth to *serve* it with what ever ability, or opportunity is in their hand: but are wholly *swallowed up* into a more private interest of their own. As *Meroz* was cursed not coming forth to help the Lord, *Judg.* 5. 2. 3.

3. When they *subordinate* his interest to their own, when they are carrying on an *interest* of Christ, but it is that they

may ſerve ſome private end of their own upon it: when they ingraft a ſelfiſh deſign upon Chriſts ſtock, that it may the better thrive. And thus did *Jehu*, in taking *vengeance* upon the falſe Prophets of *Baal*, and *Ahabs* houſe, which was but to confirm the Kingdom to himſelf, 2 *Kings* 10.

4. When they deal *injuriouſly* with his Saints, then they do highly diſpleaſe him: Though they are a poor deſpiſed people in the world, yet their *Redeemer* is mighty, and when they cry, he will hear them.

I find two *principal* places in the prophefie of *Iſaiah*, wherein the Lord is preſented in a *ſtrange* heat of wrath; the one is 34. *Iſaiah* the beginning of it.

The indignation of the Lord is upon all Nations, and his fury upon all their Armies, verſe 2.

Their mountains ſhall be melted with blood, verſ. 3.

And the Hoſt of Heaven ſhall be diſſolved, verſ. 4.

And my ſword ſhall be bathed in Heaven, verſ. 5.

And the ſword of the Lord is filled with blood, verſ. 6.

Now if you ask me, *What means the heat of this great wrath?* he tels you verſ. 8. *It is the day of the Lords vengeance, and the yeer of recompence for the controverſie of Sion.*

The other place is 63. *Iſaiah* beginning. Where the Lord is ſet forth in his *red Apparel*, and his *garment died in blood*, and treading the *Wine-preſſe* of wrath: And the reaſon of all this you read in the 4. verſ. *For the day of Vengeance is in mine heart, and the yeer of my redeemed is come.*

We cannot touch God in a tenderer part, then in his people, for they are the *Apple of his eye.*

Juſtin Martyr in his *Apology* for the *Chriſtians*, tells the *Roman Emperours*, that whiles they perſecuted the Saints, the Empire was afflicted with Floods, Earth-quakes, Peſtilence, &c: It was not their tolerating, but their perſecuting them, that brought thoſe calamities upon them. Nothing will ſooner bring down wrath upon a people then this.

And

And on the other hand, to protect and *Cherish* the Saints, is that which God takes *kindly* at the hands of *Magistrates*: and which is likely, eminently to *conduce* to the *prosperity* of their affaires, according to the promise in the 122. *Psal.* 6. *They shall prosper that love thee.* Only I would be understood as speaking of *true Saints*, and they *walking* as Saints.

But I hasten to a Conclusion. And therefore I come now to the last *part* of the Text, as I divided it at the beginning, and that is the *Argument* whereby this Counsel is enforced, (for so I shall make use of it) upon the Kings and Judges of the Earth; This will be their *Wisdom* and their understanding, *Be wise now therefore*, or, *And now, be wise O ye Kings, be instructed ye that Judg the Earth.*

God having before shewd them, that their opposition against his Son, would be their undoing, and *break them to pieces*, he therefore doth advise them, as they would appear to be wise men, and men well instructed to serve him; whereby they should save themselves from that destruction that else would unavoidably fall upon them.

Every man will be pretending to wisdom, and it is a thing so desirable, that even *fools* that have no wisdom, yet they will be wise in their own conceit. *O Sapientia*, as he said, *sed ubi es?* but where is *wisdom* to be found?

The *Græcians* they pretended to it; 1 *Cor.* 1. 22. *The Greeks seek after wisdom*, they had their wise men, whom they called Σοφοι, and they loved to be applauded with a σοφῶς at the end of their *Orations*, and who hath not heard of their seven Wise men?

The *Romans* they pretended to it, as the Apostle speaks 1 *Rom.* 22. *Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.*

The *Persians* they pretended to it, and they had their *Wise men* among them, who were called *Magi*.

The

The *Jews* they had their *Wise men*, whom they called *Chacamim*; and the Pharisees affected to be called *Rabbi*, *Rabbi*, which is as much as to say, a man of much learning, or wisdom.

But if you would know where true wisdom lies, the *Text* tels us, it lies in *serving* God. The *Veyn* of True Wisdom runs all along in the *service* of God. This is wisdom, though not in the worlds *ballance*, yet in the *Ballance* of the Sanctuary.

The Oracle of *Apollo* was once consulted to shew who was the wiseſt man. But it is only Gods Oracle that can resolve this; and that tells you every where it is the godly man, the man serving God.

And here first I shall shew how it is the wisdom of *men* in general, and then particularly of *Magistrates*, to serve the Lord. First in general.

1. Is it not wisdom for a man to be *seeking* his own *happiness*; and to depart from that evil which would destroy him? We see this *Instinct* of wisdom planted in the *Nature* of every creature, whereby it gathers into it self that good that is *conducible* to its happiness, and expels and avoids, what it may, that evil which is contrary, and so *destructive* to it.

Now he that is *sincerely* serving the Lord, he is the only man that is *pursuing* that good that is mans true happiness, which is *God himself*; and avoiding and expelling that *evil* which would destroy him, and that is sin: and the consequences of it. So that he is truly serving himself, that serves the Lord.

As *Job* in his 28. Chapter brings his discourse about wisdom to this conclusion, in the last verse, *Behold the fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom, and to depart from evil that is understanding.*

And *Salomon* a man well able to judg of wisdom and folly, gives us a character of both *Prov.* 22. 3. *A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; the wicked passe on, and are punished.*

2. Is

2. Is it not wiſdom to beſtow a mans ſervice and labour where it will turn moſt to his account? A wiſe man will not run and ſweat to catch a *Butterfly*; He will ſee whether that which he toyls and travels for will countervail his pains: For, *what profit* (ſaith the wiſe man,) *hath he that hath laboured for the wind? Eccleſ.* 5. 16. Now no *labour* doth bring in ſuch a rich *Revenue*, doth ſo turn to a mans account, as that which is *beſtowed* upon the ſervice of God.

Again, Is it not wiſdom for a man to improve his ſeaſon? *There is a ſeaſon for every thing under the ſun*, ſaith *Solomon*; and the *wiſe* man watcheth his ſeaſon: The wiſe *Merchant* will obſerve his ſeaſon; and the wiſe *Phyſician* his ſeaſon; and the wiſe *Stateſman* his, and the wiſe *Husbandman* his; yea the *Ant* doth embrace its ſeaſon, the *Swallow*, the *Crane*, the *Stork*, they do all obſerve their ſeaſons: And therefore the Apoſtle exhorts the Epheſians, *Eph.* 5. 15. *To walk circumſpectly, not as fools, but as wiſe, redeeming the time*, or the ſeaſon.

Now mans ſeaſon it is in general the fruit of his being in this world, or that day of grace that is in his hand, which he is to make uſe of, to get *acquaintance* with God, and to *lay up for himſelf a good foundation againſt the time to come*: which no man is doing, but he alone that is faithfully ſerving God.

4. It is wiſdom to ſubject a man's ſelf to that *Lord*, that hath a true *Right* to him; to whom of *Right* he owes ſubjection and ſervice. And a wiſe man will not willingly ſubject himſelf to any that upon no account hath Right to him: A ſervant willingly ſubjects himſelf to his own Maſter, and a child to his own Father, for they ſee they have a Right to them; but not to ſtrangers.

Now he that is ſerving the Lord, he ſubjects himſelf to that *Maſter* that hath a true Right to his ſervice: whereas now carnal men ſubject themſelves to ſtrange Lords, Satan,

Satan, and fleshly lusts, *&c.* that have no *Right* at all to Rule over them; which as it is their sin, so it is their folly also.

5 It is wisdom to make provision for the future: a fool only looks at what is just before him; but a wise man is able to see a far off. Now he that looks beyond this, τὸ νῦν, this present time, and is making provision for eternity, this is the wise man; and no man doth this, but he that in good earnest is serving the Lord.

But then especially it is the wisdom of Magistrates to serve the Lord; and I will shew it only in these two particulars, 1. It will be their stability. And 2. Their Prosperity.

1. This will be their *Stability*. Nothing doth more establish Common-wealths and Kingdoms, then when the Power and Authority of those that sit at *Stern* is improved for the Lord. As God told *Solomon*, 2 Chron. 7. 17, 18. *If thou wilt walk before me as David thy Father, and do according to all that I commanded thee, and observe my Statutes and Judgements:* What then? *Then will I establish the Throne of thy Kingdom*, &c. *But* (he adds) *If you turn away, then will I pluck you up by the root out of my Land*, &c.

Yea, he makes such a promise to *Jeroboam*, 1 King. 11. 38. *If thou wilt walk in my ways, and do that which is right in my sight, and keep my Statutes*, &c. *Then I will be with thee, and build thee a sure House.*

I need not tell you in what a *tottering condition* the Nation stands, how it is shaken by divisions, and what a discontented spirit is working every where: now if any thing in the world do establish us, I do not say, take it from me, but take it from the God of Truth, it must be a holy subjection to the Lord, and an hearty serving his Will, his Glory, and his Providence, with what Talents he entrusts us with.

2. This will be their *Prosperity*. It was the counsel

hat

that *David* gave *Solomon* at his death, and therefore ſure had weight in it, 1 *Kings* 2. 3. *Keep the charge of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways*, &c. And what then? *That thou mayſt proſper in all that thou doſt, and whitherſoever thou turneſt thy ſelf.* What can be more plain?

So that now (*Honoured* and *Beloved*) ye ſee what is the way to have Counſel, and direction come in upon you; and ſucceſſe and proſperity to follow you in your *Affairs*; and what will be found to be *wiſdom*, when all wicked and *Machiavilian* Policy, which hath too much acted the Counſels of men, and the power of the world ſhall be diſcovered to be but meer folly in the end.

Now is it not an unſeemly thing to ſee a *Counſel* without wiſdom, and a *Chriſtian Counſel* without Chriſtian wiſdom?

Thus I have done, yet only give me leave to add theſe two words by way of *enforcement* upon the whole.

1. Conſider that your day is ſhort. The *day* of your life is ſhort; but your day of *ſervice* may be ſhorter. And therefore, *What ever your hand findeth to do, do it with your might*, Eccleſ. 9. 10. Which is the Counſel of *Solomon*, the wiſeſt Prince, and States-man that ever ſate upon Throne: And as he Counſelled, ſo he practized. For with what vigour and induſtry did he manage that great work which was in his hand, of building the houſe of God. So that he finiſht it in ſeven years, and an half, as you may eaſily compute it if you read the 1 *Kings* 6. But he was thirteen yeares in building his own houſe, 1 *Kings* 7. 1. which is recorded not for his diſparagement, but his commendation, that he followed the work of Gods Houſe with greater vigour, then his own houſe: A good pattern for our imitation.

Yea we have the example of one greater then *Solomon*, even *Chriſt* himſelf, for the improvement of our day, *John* 10. 4. *I muſt work the works of him that ſent me while it is day, the night cometh wherein no man can work.*

The natural day was appointed for work, ſo is the day

of life, the day of grace, and the day of service; and when the night comes upon any of these dayes, then is the time of work ceased, with you, with me, and with all men.

And is not this *day* short at longest? and much of it is already past; and that which remains, flees faster away then an Eagle in the Ayr, or an Arrow from the Bow of the mighty. Therefore let me *beseech* you, to be walking, and working, and living apace, for the shadows of the evening will suddenly be upon you.

2. Consider lastly, that your account is hastening, when *You must give an account of our Stewardship, and be no longer Stewards.*

And stand naked at the *Bar* of Christ devested of all your external Ornaments, whether, Riches, Power, Honour, greatness, and the like, and every one give account of himself unto the Lord.

And the *Judgement* will not proceed so much upon this or that particular action, as what hath been the main end, and *Scope* of your life. Whether you have been *living* to Christ, or to your selves.

Those that now can summon others to stand at their bar, must ere long stand at the bar of *Christ* themselves; and give up their accounts to him that is *the Great and only Postmate*; the Supream Judg of the World; from whom there is no appeal, and against whom there is no resistance: and according to the Judgment they receive there, so to stand, either *Justified* or *Condemned* for ever.

FINIS.